

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-12, 14-16 and 18-20 are pending in the present application. By this reply, claims 7, 13, and 17 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 12 15 and 20 are independent claims.

The Specification, drawings and claims have been revised to correct minor informalities and to clarify the invention according to U.S. practice. These modifications are fully supported by the original disclosure and do not add new matter.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant acknowledges Examiner's indication that claims 4, 7, 11, 13, 14, and 17-19 are objected to, but will be allowable if rewritten if in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, only to expedite prosecution, independent claims 1, 12 and 15 have been amended respectively to incorporate therein the subject matter of allowable claims 7, 13 and 17. Independent claim 20 has been amended to incorporate therein allowable claim 17. Thus, independent claims 1, 12, 15 and 20 and their dependent claims are allowable over the prior art of record. This also places the application in condition for allowance.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto is one (1) replacement sheet of corrected drawings that comply with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. The corrected drawings incorporate the following drawing changes:

In Fig. 1B, "vertical" has been changed to --horizontal--
for elements 201 to 206 to be consistent with the
specification description.

It is respectfully requested that the corrected drawings be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.

35 USC §103 Rejection

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 9-10, 12, 15-16 and 20 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Allen et al. (U.S. Patent 6,535,221) and further in view of Jiang et al. (U.S. Patent 6,421,090).

Without acquiescing to any of the Examiner's allegations made in rejecting these claims, to advance prosecution only, independent claims 1, 12, 15 and 20 have been amended to incorporate therein allowable claim 7, 13 or 17 as discussed above. Thus, these claims are allowable over the prior art of record and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons and in view of the above clarifying amendments, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw all of the objections and rejections of record, and earnestly solicits an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s): One (1) sheet of drawings.